

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/057 W

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R 231121Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7226

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

COMUSMACHTAI BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1553

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: THAI POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY. FORMER AIR CHIEF MARSHAL THAWI CHUNLASAP ELECTED LEADER OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY. FORMER LEADER THAWIT KLINPRATHUM BECOMES PARTY'S NEW SECRETARY GENERAL. SAWAT KHAMPRAKOP, MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, ELECTED AS LEADER OF THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY. THAILAND'S TOP SINGER WILL RUN UNDER NEW FORCE PARTY BANNER. END SUMMARY.

1. THE EXPECTED REORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (SFP) IS TAKING PLACE. PRAMUAN KUNLAMAT, SJP MEMBER AND FORMER DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, CONFIRMED TO OUR CHIEF POLITICAL ASSISTANT THAT RETIRED AIR CHIEF MARSHAL THAWI CHUNLASAP WAS ELECTED LEADER OF THE SJP ON JANUARY 22. HE SUCCEEDS THAWIT KLINPRATHUM, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, WHO BECOMES THE SECRETARY GENERAL. AT THE SAME TIME, FOUR LEADERS OF THE SJP, INCLUDING THREE CABINET MINISTERS, RESIGNED FROM THE
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PARTY. THEY ARE POL. LT. COL. BUNLOET LOETPRICHA, FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SJP AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF

INTERIOR; SURIN THEPKANCHANA, FORMER DEPUTY PARTY LEADER AND MINISTER OF INDUSTRY; THONGYOT CHITTAWIRA, FORMER DEPUTY PARTY LEADER AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE; AND CHUSIN KONAN, FORMER LEADER OF A FACTION IN THE SJP. TWELVE OTHER FORMER SJP MP'S ALSO ARE REPORTED TO HAVE RESIGNED FROM THE PARTY ON JANUARY 22. MOST OF THESE ARE EXPECTED TO JOIN THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY OR THE THAI NATION PARTIES. ACCORDING TO THE NATION OF JANUARY 23 BUNLOET CLAIMED THAT SURIN, THONGYOT, CHUSIN AND HE HAD ALREADY JOINED THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY. PRAMUAN KUNLAMAT ALSO SAID THAT HE AND PRASOET SUTBANTHAT, SJP MP FROM SARABURI, WOULD BECOME DEPUTY PARTY LEADERS OF THE SJP.

2. SAWAT KHAMPRAKOP, MINISTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND FORMER DEPUTY PARTY LEADER OF THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY, WAS ELECTED TO REPLACE SAWET PIAMPHONSOAN AS PARTY LEADER. SAWET JOINED THE DEMOCRAT PARTY TWO DAYS AGO.

3. SUTHEP WONGKAMHAENG, THAILAND'S TOP SINGER, WILL APPARENTLY RUN IN THE APRIL 4 ELECTIONS AS A MEMBER OF THE NEW FORCE PARTY EITHER IN BANGKOK OR IN KORAT, HIS BIRTHPLACE. SUTHEP RAN FOR COUNCIL SEAT IN THE BANGKOK GUBERNATORIAL ELECTIONS LAST AUGUST BUT LOST.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PARTY LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BANGKO01553
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760027-1092
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760129/aaaaazjf.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 JUN 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <29 SEP 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THAI POLITICAL PARTY DEVELOPMENTS SUMMARY. FORMER AIR CHIEF MARSHAL THAWI CHUNLASAP ELECTED
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH, SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY, SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY, (THAWI CHUNLASAP), (SAWAT KHAMPRAKOP)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006